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PARKING
IN SAN FRANCISCO

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

A REPORT TO THE CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

CHARNA STATEN, CONSULTANT ⁘ CITYWIDE PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

8201344

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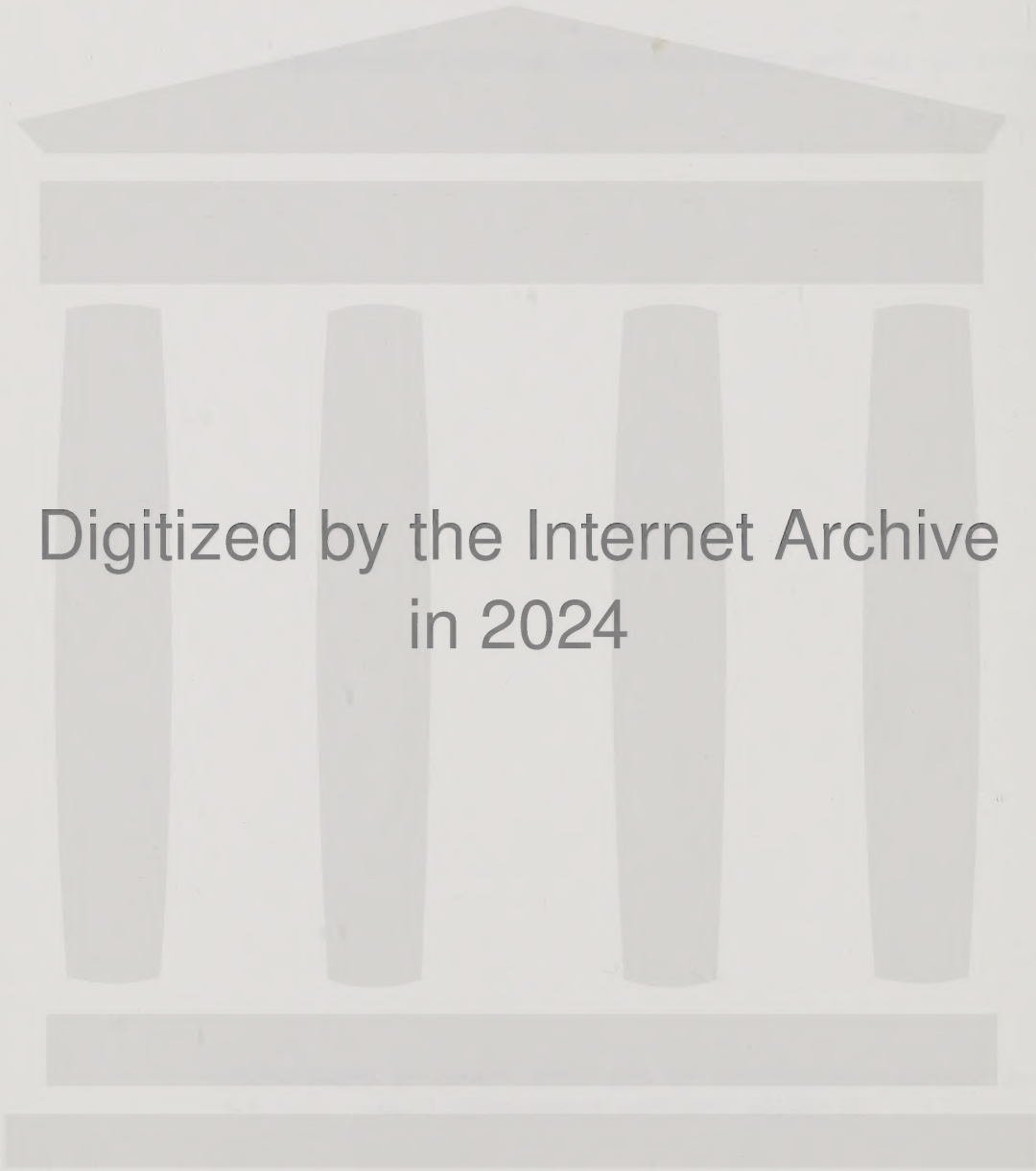
A report to the San Francisco City Planning Department

December 1975

Charna Staten, Consultant to the City Planning Department,
Citywide Parking Management Plan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INTRODUCTION

The San Francisco Departments of City Planning and Public Works recently completed a joint report on parking policies and programs along with a report on parking conditions and trends. These two reports were undertaken in response to the United States Environmental Protection Agency requirements on parking management. These reports, after public hearings, will be presented to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for their consideration in formulating regional parking and transportation control strategies. They are also intended to serve as a tool for decision making on new parking facilities in San Francisco, as well as defining parking programs which, by controlling the provision and use of parking, could help lead to reductions in the emissions generated by auto use by changing the pattern of that use.

The purpose of this report is to take the process one step further and define actions which can be taken by the City and specifically the City Planning Department and Commission to implement the policies and programs contained in the joint report on parking policies and programs.

I. ADOPTION OF PARKING OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Recommendation: The policies proposed by the City Planning Department should be considered for adoption as a part of the Master Plan. The Planning Commission may want to consider strengthening these policies by making the wording more definitive. The Planning Commission may also want to consider adding the other policies suggested in this report.

One of the two objectives of the Parking Management Plan work program was "to develop a citywide parking plan that will implement and make more specific the objectives and policies of the Master Plan."

Therefore, during the course of the study, the two departments developed objectives and policies regarding parking and recommended in the study report that they form the basis of a proposed revision to the Transportation element of the Master Plan. Specifically, these objectives and policies are meant to replace the existing section of the Transportation element entitled "Citywide Parking Plan" by expanding that section and incorporating within it several of the already adopted policies regarding the use of existing street space for residential parking and the provision of bicycle parking.

It is recommended that the City Planning Department and Commission consider as their first priority in parking management the process leading to the adoption of the proposed objectives and policies (summarized on the following pages). This entails the submission by the Planning Department

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Citywide

OBJECTIVE 1. Encourage actions that will reduce the need for parking spaces by encouraging a shift to transit as the way to travel.

POLICY 1. Encourage employer incentives for transit use and carpooling by employees.

POLICY 2. Use the City's taxing power to promote the efficient and appropriate use of the parking supply and to encourage the use of transit and carpooling.

POLICY 3. Pursue a program of staggered work hours in order to more efficiently utilize the existing transit, street and freeway systems.

OBJECTIVE 2. Ensure that the provision of new or enlarged parking facilities does not adversely affect the livability and desirability of the city and its various neighborhoods.

POLICY 1. Approve new or enlarged parking facilities only if they conform to Master Plan policies or established criteria.

POLICY 2. Discourage demolition of sound residential, commercial and industrial buildings for parking facilities.

POLICY 3. Where new structures are provided, consideration should be given to the inclusion of other uses in order to gain maximum use of scarce land resources and integrate the structure into the surrounding neighborhood.

POLICY 4. Restrict long-term automobile parking at rapid transit stations in the city in favor of development of efficient feeder bus service.

OBJECTIVE 3.* Provide convenient and safe parking facilities for bicycles.

*Objective 3 and related policies are already a part of the Transportation element of the City's Master Plan.

POLICY 1. Provide for bicycle parking where appropriate, in conjunction with automobile parking.

POLICY 2. Provide bicycle parking facilities in major new construction, such as office buildings, shopping and medical centers and residential complexes.

POLICY 3. Provide for secure bicycle parking in conjunction with parks and recreation facilities.

Downtown

OBJECTIVE 1. Preserve the viability of the Downtown business and shopping district.

POLICY 1. Short-term parking facilities should be in convenient locations near or adjacent to but not within the downtown core.

POLICY 2. Limit the location of long-term parking facilities to areas peripheral to the downtown commercial district.

POLICY 3. Encourage conversion of existing all day commuter parking to short-term parking in areas of high demand.

POLICY 4. Encourage conversion of existing long-term (basically commuter) parking to car/vanpool parking where short-term parking demands are low.

POLICY 5. Discourage new parking lots in the downtown commercial district.

POLICY 6. Limit the location of drive-in and auto-oriented uses to sites outside the existing and projected concentrated office, retail and general commercial districts of downtown.

POLICY 7. Provide "fringe" parking at appropriate locations to intercept auto trips destined for downtown or other major activity centers and provide shuttle transit to complete the trips.

Institutional

OBJECTIVE 1. Contain and lessen the traffic and parking impact of institutions on surrounding residential areas.

POLICY 1. Limit long-term parking to the extent that transit is a feasible alternative to reach the institutions.

POLICY 2. Encourage institutions to regulate the fees for their off-street parking so that clients and visitors to the institution will be encouraged to use the parking rather than preempting parking in surrounding residential neighborhoods.

POLICY 3. Encourage institutions to actively pursue transit alternatives for their employees, visitors and users.

Residential

OBJECTIVE 1.* Provide parking facilities in residential areas within the capacity of the city's street system and land use patterns.

POLICY 1. Encourage low or no-auto ownership in neighborhoods that are well served by transit and are convenient to neighborhood shopping.

POLICY 2. Convert a portion of existing standard sized off-street spaces to compact car spaces where possible to meet additional parking needs.

POLICY 3. In new housing, especially multi-family housing, a portion of the off-street parking spaces should be for compact cars.

POLICY 4.** Use existing street space to increase residential parking where off-street facilities are inadequate.

* Objective 1 is already a part of the Plan for Transportation.

**Policy 4 is already a part of the Plan for Transportation.

OBJECTIVE 2. Protect residential neighborhoods from the parking impacts of nearby traffic generators.

POLICY 1. Investigate the use of the preferential parking concept wherever residential neighborhoods are experiencing substantial parking impacts as a result of a traffic generator.

Neighborhood Shopping Districts

OBJECTIVE 1. Insure that provision of short-term parking facilities is compatible with the character of the district and preserves a desirable environment for pedestrians and residents.

POLICY 1. Allow only those proposed new parking facilities in neighborhood shopping districts which meet established guidelines.

POLICY 2. Allow land uses which by their nature attract automobiles or which are designed to serve persons waiting in parked automobiles only if they meet established guidelines.

OBJECTIVE 2. Use new and existing parking facilities as efficiently as possible in order to conserve scarce land resources.

POLICY 1. Reserve a portion of spaces in parking lots and garages for compact automobiles.

POLICY 2. Make existing and new accessory parking available for general public use when not being utilized by the facility to which it is accessory.

to the Commission and to the public of a "Proposal for Citizen Review" containing the objectives and policies. This submission would be followed by a series of public hearings (and meetings with community groups as requested), revisions to the proposal as necessary and final adoption by the Commission.

Additional Policies

The Planning Department may want to consider the inclusion of two additional policies to the proposal. One relates to the provision of needed residential parking in community garages (as defined in the Planning Code) and the other relates to the location of auto-intensive land uses outside the downtown core. These additional policies could read as follows:

POLICY. Encourage the provision of needed off-street residential parking in community garages.

There are some residential neighborhoods in San Francisco, which, because of the density of development and the age of the buildings, have inadequate off-street parking for residents, causing severe parking congestion on the streets, not only for the residents but also for guests and service vehicles. In such cases, the provision of a community garage for the off-street storage of residents' vehicles may offer a solution to this situation and should be considered. Careful situation and design of community garages must be ensured through the conditional use review procedure of the Planning Commission. Community garages may also be a preferable solution to the provision of required off-street parking in new residential developments where a large number of units are being built at low density.

POLICY. Encourage firms requiring large numbers of automobiles to carry out their business to locate outside the downtown commercial district.

There are some firms which, because of the nature of their business must use large numbers of automobiles to reach clients situated at locations throughout the City or the Bay Area. Because of the potentially detrimental impact of such fleets on congested downtown streets carrying large numbers of automobiles, trucks and transit vehicles, firms requiring business fleets should be encouraged to find locations outside the downtown commercial district, or alternatively, to locate their fleet parking in a separate garage outside downtown.

Policy Disagreement

There are two policies in which the Departments were in disagreement -- the policy regarding long-term parking at rapid transit (BART) stations and the policy regarding provision of short-term parking facilities in downtown.

In regard to long-term parking at rapid transit stations, the Department of City Planning held that this type of parking is inappropriate at BART stations with the possible exception of the Balboa Park station and that commuter access should instead be provided by transit. The reasons for this position involve the location of the stations in areas that are already intensely developed commercially (such as the Montgomery, Powell and Mission Street stations) and where additional auto traffic and parking is undesirable or are surrounded by small scale residential and shopping districts (such as Glen Park) where parking facilities would either draw additional traffic along local streets or be out of scale with their surroundings. It should also be noted that the provision of long-term parking facilities, while temporarily relieving local parking impacts on the neighborhoods, can not practicably meet the "demand" for parking when the increasing capacity of BART to carry commuters is considered -- 7200 persons seated per hour when the Richmond-Daly City line is added in the near future, 21,600 persons seated per hour ultimately when BART reaches its design operation of 10 car trains every 2 minutes. Additionally, in providing "some" drivers a place to park, the expectation of a parking space is established, leading to a pattern of driving to the facility hoping for a space -- if this fails, parking on the street occurs. It is clear that the stations are already generating on-street parking demands which in the Charles Street area around the Daly City station and the Glen Park residential neighborhood are causing considerable inconvenience to residents. The approach taken by the City to solving this problem should be to restrict such parking by the use of the preferential parking concept and to enforce existing meter and time limited spaces, in conjunction with improving transit access, rather than by the provision of long-term parking.

The adoption of a policy restricting long-term parking would also be consistent with other Master Plan policies regarding the protection of residential neighborhoods from heavy traffic and the need for additional commuter trips to be handled by transit.

In regard to the issue of locating short-term parking facilities within the downtown core area, the Department of City Planning held that such facilities are appropriate only in locations peripheral to and outside of the downtown core as defined in the Plan for Transportation. The reasons for this are several: 1) the Plan for Transportation presently defines areas peripheral to that core as the appropriate location for such facilities, and 2) the Planning Code, in Section 143 contains criteria for review of major parking garages including one which states that location of such facilities should be near or adjacent to but not inside concentrated areas of development in the C-3-O and C-3-R districts in order to provide convenient access. The expansion of that core should be considered in the light of new development and will be discussed further in this report.

These two factors form the basis for this position, although they are not the only ones which lead to this position. A primary assumption of the Plan for Transportation is that "a desirable living environment and a prosperous business environment cannot be maintained if traffic levels continue to increase without limits. Various methods must be used to control and reshape the impact of automobiles on the city and to use other means of transportation to improve the environment." Since the

adoption of Section 143 of the Planning Code in 1968, and the Plan for Transportation in 1972, a tremendous amount of new floor area has been built within this area -- 5,026,000 square feet in buildings over 10 stories tall between 1968 and 1972; 8,685,000 since the Plan for Transportation was adopted. Another 1,491,000 square feet are under construction, and by 1980, if all of the projects which are already approved or are in the permit process are built, another 3,800,000 square feet of office space alone will be added to this area. There are today 67 garages containing more than 16,000 spaces and 51 lots containing 4250 spaces within this downtown core area, and the supply of parking has been increasing in this area at the rate of 1400 spaces annually. Almost 3000 spaces may be added to the inventory in the next five years by new accessory parking and new garages planned or being built in this area (not including more than 1000 spaces that would be added by Yerba Buena Center as now proposed).

The streets in this area are generally operating at capacity during the peak commute period (the San Francisco Downtown Zoning Study in 1966 indicated that most of the downtown streets were already operating at 75 percent or more of vehicle capacity in the peak hour), and the peak period is beginning earlier in the afternoon. An examination of traffic flow data gathered by the Department of Public Works shows that traffic levels on the various freeway ramps serving downtown have been increasing steadily in the evening peak hour over the past 10 years. For instance, the Clay Street on-ramp to the Embarcadero Skyway carried 810 vehicles in the evening peak hour in 1968, in 1973 the figure was 1540 vehicles; for the Beale Street on-ramp to I-80, the figures are 590 and 1280 respectively. These vehicles travel on the downtown streets before reaching the ramps.

It should be noted that it is not just the commute period represented by the evening peak hour levels that should be of concern to San Francisco -- 24 hour traffic flows on major freeways and bridges leading to the City have also increased significantly, and the traffic flows on downtown streets have also increased. The James Lick (Highway 101) Freeway where it crosses Army Street carried 171,000 vehicles daily in 1965; in 1973, 202,000 vehicles passed this point -- in addition to 48,600 vehicles in 1973 on I-280 at Army Street (in 1965 I-280 did not yet extend to Army Street). In 1965, I-280 at Alemany was carrying 50,300 vehicles daily; by 1973 this figure had increased to 105,000. During the same period, traffic on Junipero Serra north of 19th Avenue increased from 13,600 to 35,500 vehicles daily, and on 19th Avenue at Sloat Boulevard the figures were 36,000 and 54,000. Daily traffic levels on the Golden Gate Bridge increased from 72,000 in 1965 to 92,000 in 1973, and on the Bay Bridge from 133,000 to 184,000.

New employment in the downtown area may add as many as 95,000 persons during the day by the year 2000, and the increasing floor area and assumed new businesses will attract significant new numbers of short-term business, shopping and other trips to the area.

Great care, therefore must be exercised to insure that this anticipated growth in the downtown core will not create street conditions that could ultimately lead to the deterioration of what is now a desirable and pleasant business and shopping area. The provision of more parking facilities will

not necessarily improve street -- or business -- conditions. Such provision could instead add to the existing congestion by attracting more automobiles. No new facilities does not, however, mean no new access. It means, instead, that new access should take the form of transit, carpooling, walking or shuttle transit connections from parking facilities located peripherally to the core, or conversion of long-term commuter parking to short-term parking to serve non-work trips.

This policy should be considered as working jointly with the proposed policy which calls for the conversion of long-term parking in areas of high short-term parking demand downtown, particularly in the retail area surrounding Union Square and the heart of the financial district. This conversion could be accomplished most easily in the City owned garages serving the area (such as Union Square Garage, Ellis-O'Farrell Garage, Portsmouth Square Garage, Golden Gateway Garage and Sutter-Stockton Garage), although conversion in privately owned garages may also be possible. Such conversion would provide new short-term parking capacity without the need of new structures, and would also serve to locate long-term parkers outside of the area in peripheral facilities.

II. ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT ADOPTED POLICIES

Should the policies proposed in the study report be adopted, there are a number of specific actions that can be taken by the Planning Department and Commission to implement these policies. Along with actions taken by the private sector and other governmental agencies and branches such as the Board of Supervisors, they would form the parking management effort of the City. It has been recognized by both the Federal and the Regional levels of government that the most effective - and feasible - parking management efforts will be those taken at the local level, reflecting the particular problems and needs of the locality.

A. Proposed Policy: (Citywide) Approve new or enlarged facilities only if they conform to Master Plan policies or established criteria.

Given with this proposed policy are the following criteria under which new facilities should be reviewed:

- That there is a demonstrated demand for additional parking spaces in the surrounding area (in the case of public facilities) or for a specific development.

- That all or part of this demand cannot reasonably be diverted to or served by existing or proposed transit (especially commute work trips).

- That this demand cannot be met elsewhere in the area in existing facilities.

- That in the case of desired accessory parking, the accessory use is clearly established and not presumed. Accessory use parking is that parking customarily provided incidental to a permitted use and directly related to the activities conducted on the site of the use, and is designed to serve the use of the auto as a part of the business on the site.

- That the facility is intended for short-term or carpool parking in preference to long-term, all day commute parking. In this regard, the fee schedule should favor short-term parking.

- That the traffic generated by the facility will not create a substantial adverse affect on the surrounding city streets (espeically residential streets) and corridors leading into the city.

- That the facility, viewed in a citywide context of parking supplied and trips generated will not act against the possible diversion of existing auto users to transit.

- That the location is appropriate in terms of adjacent land uses and continuity of existing uses on the street.

- That the proposed site and facility are accessible from freeway ramps and major thoroughfares (where applicable).

- That conflict with pedestrian movements and amenities resulting from driveways or ramps is minimized, continuity of shopping facilities along sidewalks is maintained and additional auto traffic through areas of heavy pedestrian concentration is avoided.

- That there is no substantial conflict with existing or future patterns of other forms of transportation, especially transit and transit preferential streets.

- That secure, convenient bicycle parking is provided.

Furthermore, specific criteria are given for new short-term facilities peripheral to the downtown core and for new facilities serving neighborhood shopping districts.

There are several ways in which this review might be accomplished. One is by making new parking facilities conditional uses in the Planning Code, requiring review by the City Planning Commission. This procedure would allow conditions to be attached to the authorization of facilities, or allow the Commission to deny authorization (with appeal to the Board of Supervisors). In this situation, the criteria for review would only need to be included in the Master Plan or could be adopted separately by the Planning Commission by resolution as the criteria under which the Commission would review conditional use parking facilities.

It should be noted that the current Planning Code lists parking garages as conditional uses in the C-3-O, C-3-R, C-3-G and C-3-S zoning districts, parking lots as conditional in C-1, C-3-O, C-3-R and C-3-G zoning districts. Parking lots are permitted as principal uses in C-2, C-3-S, C-M, M-1 and M-2 districts; parking garages are permitted as principal uses in C-2 districts (if completely enclosed; if not completely enclosed they are conditional), and in C-M, M-1 and M-2 districts. Parking garages that are public buildings requiring approval by the Board of Supervisors are permitted as principal uses, although they must be reviewed by the Planning Commission in terms of conformity with the Master

Plan. Parking lots are already conditional uses in residential districts. Therefore, the districts in which parking facilities would become conditional uses where they are now permitted principal uses are: lots -- C-2, C-3-S, C-M, M-1 and M-2 districts; garages -- C-2, C-M, M-1 and M-2 districts.

Another way of accomplishing this review would be to establish conditions within the Planning Code which must be met before a facility is allowed, with facilities not meeting the Code conditions becoming Conditional Uses. This approach would be similar to Planning Code provisions that must be met regarding minimum lot width and area, lot coverage and the like before a new residential building may be constructed. This could be seen as being a more desirable approach because it lessens the amount of discretionary review which the Planning Commission must undertake and entails less staff time for case preparation. (Although it should be noted that in the case of large facilities, it is very likely that an environmental impact report would be required, and much of the information needed for conditional use review would be generated through this process.)

However, the situation of each parking facility varies greatly depending upon the proposed location and the problems that might be generated by each facility may also vary greatly so that generating standards specific enough for includion in the Code and yet broad enough to cover all of these situations would be quite difficult. Nevertheless, if amendment of the Planning Code to make parking facilities conditional proves to be politically infeasible, this alternative should be considered.

Recommendation: Any proposed new or enlarged parking facility should be considered a conditional use, and be reviewed by the City Planning Commission according to the review procedure established in Section 303 of the Planning Code. This review should apply to all proposed facilities (surface lots and garage structures). This would not apply to parking that is required by the Planning Code.

The following changes in the Planning Code would be required if this review is desired.

1. Section 223(l, m, n, and p): In all cases where such uses are now indicated as "P" (permitted as a principal use), they should be changed to "C" (subject to approval by the Planning Commission as a conditional use as provided in Section 303 of the Planning Code). Section 223(o), a storage garage that is a public building requiring approval by the Board of Supervisors under other provisions of law should not be changed; rather, the stricter review criteria would be applied in the Master Plan Referral process required by Article III, Chapter 5 of the City Charter. If it is determined that further restriction is desired in the downtown core or C-3-O and C-3-R districts, this section would have to reflect that restriction.

Amendment of the Planning Code in this case or any other would proceed according to Section 302 of the Code, with initiation by a resolution of intention by the City Planning Commission and amendment (by ordinance) by the Board of Supervisors.

2. The criteria for review listed earlier could either be referred to under part (c)3 of Section 303 which states "that such use or feature as proposed will comply with the applicable provisions of this Code and will not adversely affect the Master Plan," or adopted by resolution of the Planning Commission as the criteria to be used in considering parking facilities under the conditional use review procedure.

It would be preferable to follow either of these alternatives rather than attempting to include the criteria in Section 303 of the Code. These alternatives offer more flexibility in changing the criteria should this be required at some future date as conditions change, and also prevent the Planning Code from being encumbered with levels of detail which may not be appropriate. It may be desirable to strengthen the wording in Section 303(c)3 which now reads "That such use or feature as proposed will comply with the applicable provisions of this Code and will not adversely affect the Master Plan." The reference to the Master Plan should be more direct -- for instance, "...and will not be in conflict with the objectives and policies of the Master Plan or criteria established pursuant to them."

Size Limit. While it was initially felt by the consultant that review should be considered only for those facilities of 25 spaces or more, closer examination of the lots which have been reviewed since 1968 indicate that if this size limit were applied, 8 of the 22 lots would not have been required to be reviewed by the Planning Commission. Additionally, a 24 space parking lot would occupy approximately 8,400 square feet, enough land on which to build 3 dwelling units or a commercial building. Furthermore, a lot of some 20 to 24 spaces, could, if located where there is intense pedestrian use or on a transit preferential street, be as detrimental to that area as a larger facility. For these reasons, it is recommended that conditional use review not be dependent upon size of the facility. The Planning Code does not now indicate a size limit for review, except in the case of accessory parking.

Environmental Review. Facilities which require conditional use review also require environmental evaluation, and if the environmental evaluation indicates that the proposed facility may have a significant effect on the environment, an environmental impact report will be required.

The Department already has a format for the environmental evaluation and guidelines for transportation data required for evaluation of the transportation impacts of proposed projects. To insure that complete information is available for the evaluations, the Department may wish to consider adding the following items to its format and guidelines.

On the environmental evaluation form for initial evaluation, under Section II-A (Project Description), an additional item could be added as follows: If a parking facility, indicate the type and amounts of parking to be provided (short-term, long-term, monthly, carpool, bicycle), whether the facility is designed to serve a specific function, such as parking for a fleet of business cars, parking for a medical center or educational institution, parking to serve a neighborhood shopping district, etc., and whether the facility is to be in operation for a limited period of time (usually only applicable in the case of a parking lot).

In the 'Guidelines for environmental impact review process/Transportation impacts', the Department might want to consider adding the following data request under Section I-F: 1) the type and number of spaces proposed (percent compact, percent short-term, percent long-term or monthly, percent fleet parking, percent assigned to specific persons; 2) the rate structure anticipated and whether parking will be self-park or attendant park; 3) if a parking lot, the length of time the applicant anticipates the facility to be in operation and whether specific development of the land is known and when this development is expected to occur; 4) if a structure, whether it is designed in such a way as to permit conversion to a non-parking use in the future; 5) whether the trips being served could be served by transit or in other surrounding facilities; 6) the number of off-street parking spaces in lots and garages in the surrounding area of impact (defined in the guidelines as being within a two block radius or beyond).

These additions should help the Department to evaluate the impact of the facility in terms of the review criteria proposed as part of the Master Plan policies.

B. Proposed Policy: (Downtown) Short-term parking facilities should be in convenient locations near or adjacent to but not within the downtown core (as defined in the Plan for Transportation).

and

Proposed Policy: (Downtown) Limit the location of long-term parking facilities to areas peripheral to the downtown commercial district.

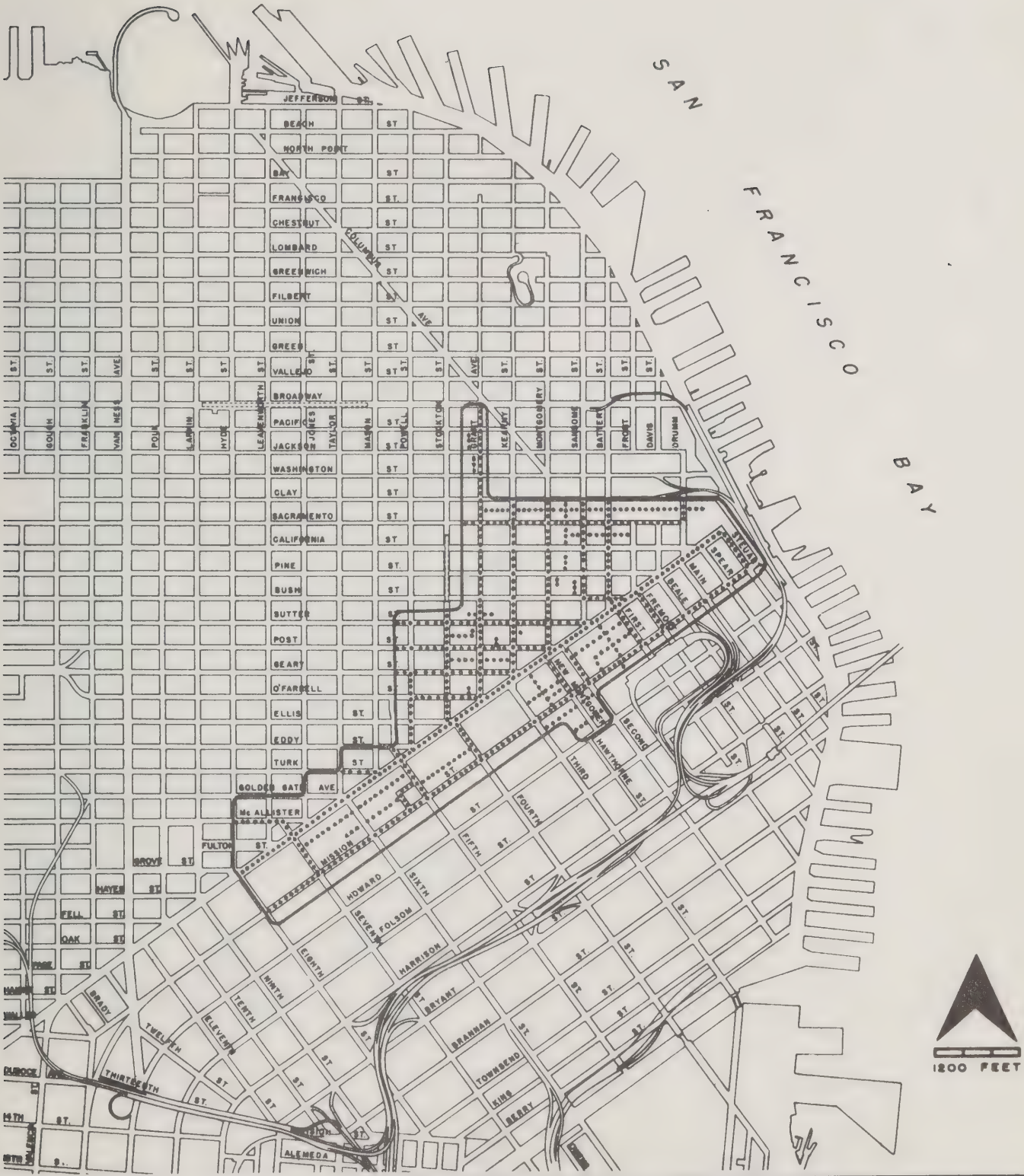
This limitation on the addition to the parking supply in the downtown core could be accomplished through the conditional use review process, making the assumption that the language of the policies and the criteria for review would insure that new facilities would in fact, not receive approval. While this might be the case with some facilities, it does permit the possibility of approval of a facility that did not meet the criteria. The alternative to conditional use review for parking facilities within this area is to establish them as a use not permitted in this area and amending the Planning Code to this effect.

Recommendation: A parking structure which is intended as a principal use and which would not be accessory parking as defined by the Planning Code should not be a permitted use in the area defined in the Plan for Transportation as the 'Downtown Core Automobile Control Area.' (See Map 1) A parking facility (lot or garage) intended to serve primarily long-term commute parking should be located outside of the C-3 Downtown Commercial area. Furthermore, the southeastern boundary of the automobile control area should be shifted to Howard Street between the Embarcadero and Second Street.

This could be accomplished in one of two ways. The first would be by considering the 'downtown core automobile control area' as basically that area contained within the C-3-O and C-3-R zoning districts (See Map 2) and amending Planning Code Section 223(m, n and p) to indicate that parking structures are not permitted within these districts. These two areas would not cover as much land area as the 'downtown core automobile control area,' but in terms of the ease of amendment of the Planning Code since the areas are already defined on the Zoning Maps. This might be more feasible for the Department and Commission. Consideration should be given to amending the map accompanying the "Downtown Transportation Plan" section of the Plan for Transportation to conform with the Planning Code change.

The second way of accomplishing this limitation would be by declaring the entire C-3 Downtown Commercial area a 'Parking Special Use District', as indicated on Map 3. Within this special use district, the 'downtown core automobile control area' could be defined as that area in which no new parking structures, as defined in Section 223(m, n and p) of the Planning Code, would be allowed. The remaining area peripheral to the automobile control area but within the C-3 Downtown Commercial area could be defined as that area appropriate for the location of new short-term parking facilities (as conditional uses if meeting the specific criteria for short-term facilities contained in the Master Plan) but where no new facilities designed for all-day commuter parking would be allowed. Should the Department desire to codify the proposed policy discouraging parking lots in the downtown commercial area, they too could be indicated as not permitted within the special use district.

The reason for the proposed shift of the southerly boundary of the automobile control area is to take into account the increasing development that has been and will be taking place in this section of South-of-Market, and the need to insure that automobile access to parking facilities in this area is not via Mission Street, where a transit preferential street program will be instituting an exclusive bus lane and routing through traffic off Mission Street at several locations. Additionally, locating facilities south of Howard Street can provide more direct access from the freeway ramps serving that area and can avoid locations served by the Main Street Ramp off the Bay Bridge and the Bayshore Freeway. Such locations make drivers take a circuitous route using Mission and Market Streets where increasing levels of automobile traffic are undesirable.

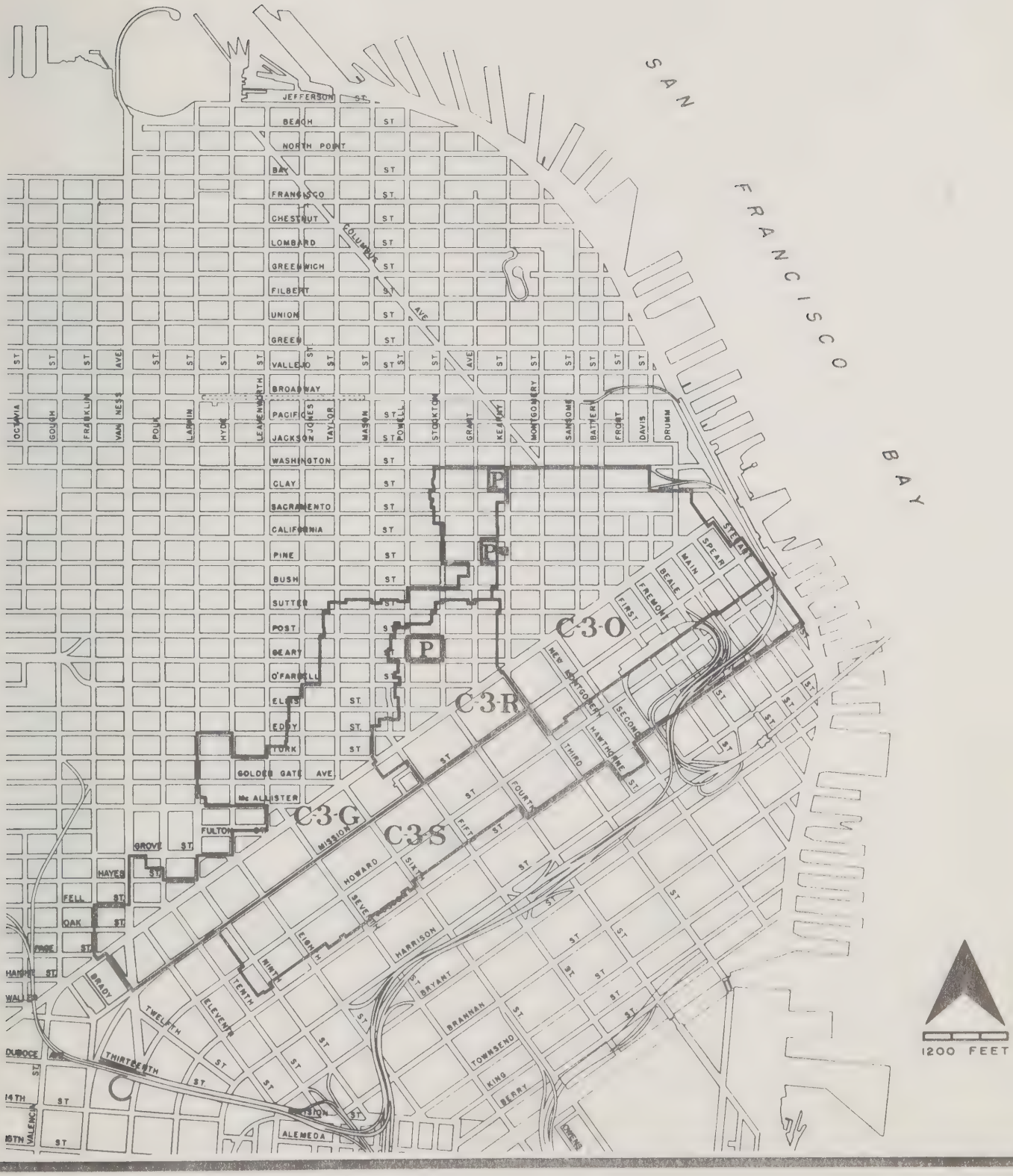


DOWNTOWN CORE AS DEFINED IN THE PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION* Map 1

——— Core Boundary

..... 'Pedestrian/Transit/Service' and 'Transit Arterial Streets'

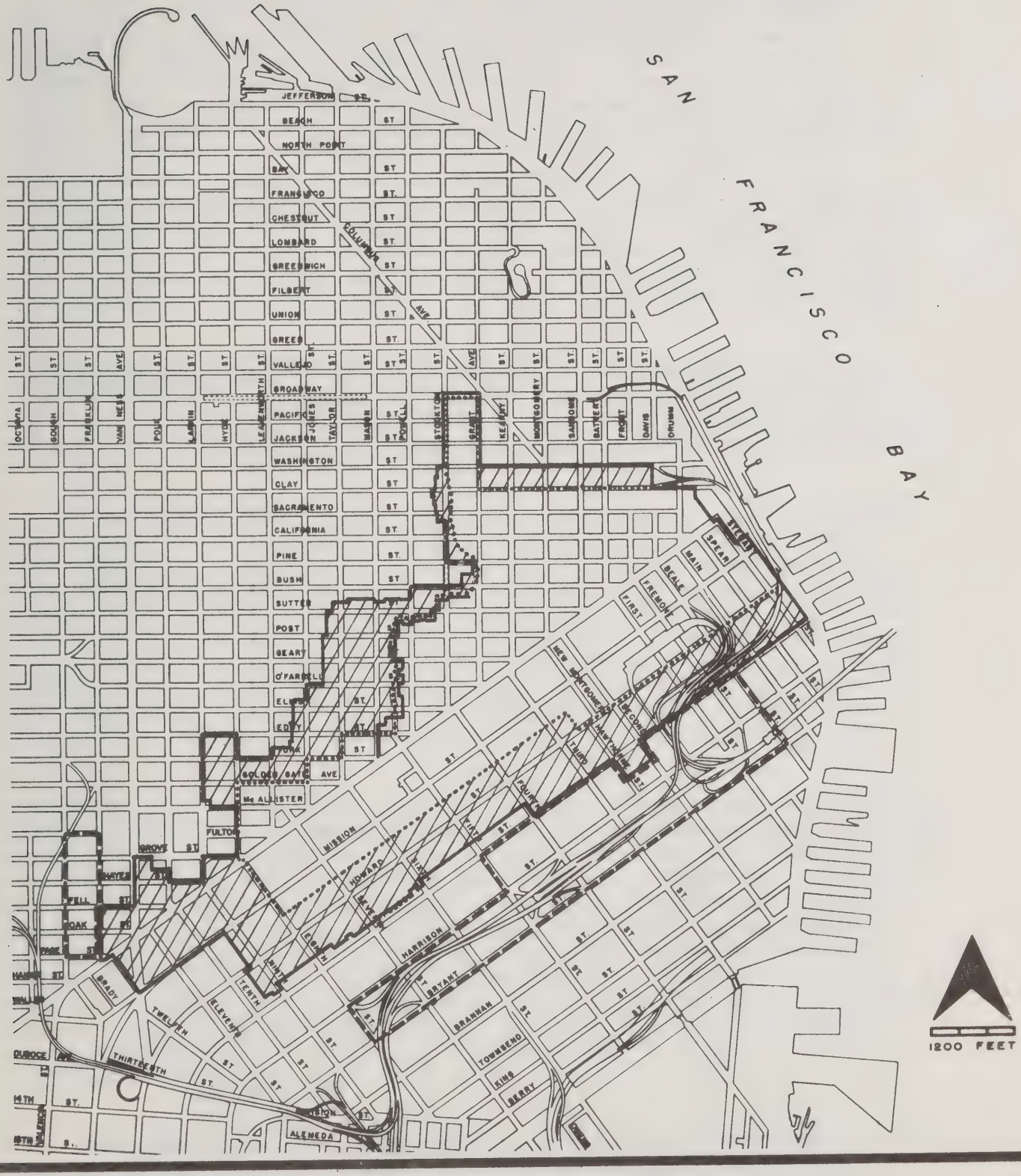
*Adopted by the City Planning Commission as an element of the City's Master Plan, April 1972



DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

Map 2

C-3-G (General)
C-3-S (Service)
C-3-R (Retail)
C-3-O (Office)
P (Public Zone)



Map 3

—— Parking Special Use District

..... Automobile Control Area

//////// Areas within the Parking Special Use District appropriate for new Short-term Parking Facilities

---- Areas appropriate for new Long-term Parking Facilities

A definition of "short-term" and "long-term" facilities would be necessary in order to apply these Planning Code provisions. The definition could refer to the rate structure and could state that the rate structure employed by the operator would have to be such that all-day commute parking would be discouraged, and that furthermore, no monthly parking rates (which are generally, in the downtown area, $30 to $50 a month less than the daily all-day rate) would be offered. By conditioning the authorization of the facility on the maintenance of such a rate structure, the Zoning Administrator would be able to take enforcement action against an operator not conforming to the condition. The definition of short-term facilities could be contained within the special use district provision in the Planning Code or could be contained in Section 212 should the Department desire to amend Section 223 to specifically exclude parking structures as a permitted land use in the C-3-O and C-3-R zoning districts.

Recommendation: The parking belts identified in the 'Transportation Plan for Downtown and Vicinity' contained in the Plan for Transportation should be changed to conform to the Planning Code provisions regarding the location of short-term and long-term facilities.

The possible locations for peripheral parking belts for the location of any new long-term parking facilities are indicated on Map 3. These locations take advantage of the proximity of the existing freeways and major thoroughfares serving the downtown area, and if facilities could be concentrated within these areas, transit could be more conveniently provided to move persons to destinations within the downtown commercial area. These locations also avoid the most heavily residential areas south of Market Street. Short-term facilities could also be located in these belts, but preference would probably be for location of such facilities within the Downtown Commercial area peripheral to the automobile control area.

Accessory Parking. It should be noted that the limitation of new facilities according to these recommendations does not mean that no new parking will be provided in the downtown area. The Planning Code, while not requiring off-street parking in the C-3 Downtown Commercial area, does permit 7% of the floor area within a new development to be utilized for accessory parking, and no change is proposed for this section of the Code. Based upon projected increases in office floor area in the downtown area to the year 2000, some 1350 to 1800 new spaces could be built in the C-3-O and C-3-R districts alone. In the South-of-Market area new development could include 700 to 1400 new parking spaces without any review. Parking in excess of the 7 percent would, of course, be considered as a conditional use and reviewed accordingly.

The reasons for these proposals are the same ones as those given earlier in this report in support of the policy to locate short-term parking facilities outside of the downtown core area. In addition, it should be noted that as early as 1963 in the Downtown General Plan and in

1966 in the San Francisco Downtown Zoning Study, a concept of intercepting automobiles at the periphery of the downtown was advocated in order to reduce conflicts between autos and increasing numbers of pedestrians. The Downtown Zoning Study indicated that major portions of Mission, Market, Turk, Ellis, O'Farrell, Geary, Post, Sutter, Bush, Powell, Stockton, Kearny, Montgomery, Sansome, Battery, Front, Washington and Clay Streets in the downtown area were already operating at 75% or more of vehicle capacity in the peak hour. These streets were in many cases also the location of the heaviest pedestrian concentrations and of the most heavily used transit lines. The Downtown Zoning Study makes a strong presumption that the greater part of new downtown development would be serviced by transit, although it noted that the use of automobiles would continue to increase for non-work trips. The purpose of these proposed changes to the Planning Code is to insure that the downtown core is maintained as an area where the traffic situation will not worsen, where transit will be able to continue and increase its share of the trips to and within this area and where pedestrians will still be able to move about safely and enjoyably. The City should also consider that if it ever desires to make any portion of the downtown an "auto free" zone, the provision of more parking facilities attracting more autos will simply add to the difficulties inherent in establishing such a zone.

C. Proposed Policy: (Downtown) Encourage conversion of existing all day commuter parking to short-term parking in areas of high demand.

As indicated in the joint report, "there are certain types of trips for which the use of the automobile may be appropriate -- short shopping trips, business and medical appointments, entertainment -- where the diversity of origins and destinations may preclude convenient transit use." The numbers of these trips to the downtown area will probably increase as new building continues, and as noted earlier, the fact that daily traffic levels have been increasing over the past years indicates that non-work trips have been increasing. Auto use and storage for both types of trips generally cannot be accommodated in the downtown core, and preference for the scarce land resources available in this area for parking and streets should be given to the short-term, non-work trips.

One way of achieving more short-term parking spaces without building new facilities is by the conversion of existing spaces used for long-term, commuter parking to short-term parking. For instance, should the Parking Authority adopt a policy that the use of parking in City-owned garages be for short-term parking and not give a monthly rate, more than 1000 spaces in five garages serving downtown could be permanently freed for short-term parking. Monthly parkers now pay rates that range from $21.45 to $30.25 less for 22 days of all-day parking than do occasional all-day parkers. A policy eliminating this monthly parking could provide a substantial amount of new short-term parking in areas where short-term demand apparently exists, at no capital cost -- a significant savings considering that the cost of land and construction is approximately $13,000 a space. If this policy were adopted, with the completion of the 500 space addition to the Sutter-Stockton garage, the downtown area could gain more than 1500 short-term spaces in the very near future.

Such conversion should not, however, be limited to public facilities. Although regulation of rates in private facilities is not currently exercised by government, the Board of Supervisors might want to consider a resolution urging parking operators in the downtown area to convert 5 percent of their monthly spaces to short-term use -- as indicated earlier, this could mean the availability of at least 400 more short-term spaces throughout the downtown.

Recommendation: Should this policy be adopted by the Planning Commission, the Commission may wish to consider adopting a resolution advising the Board of Supervisors of this policy and recommending that the Board ask the Parking Authority to implement conversion and also urging private parking operators to consider converting a portion of their long-term parking spaces to short-term spaces.

D. Proposed Policy (Downtown): Discourage new parking lots in the downtown commercial district.

The joint report stated that "proposed parking lots should be permitted only as short-term land uses where development is imminent and where the developer agrees to a limited period of operation." The reason for this recommendation stems in part from a survey of all parking lots considered under the conditional use review process since 1968 and a survey of a number of lots that were in existence prior to the conditional use review amendment to the Planning Code. These surveys indicated that nine of the eleven lots approved in the downtown commercial zoning districts were still in parking lot use -- even those approved as long ago as 1969. Several lots did have a time limit imposed, but the Planning Commission authorized extension of the permit in its resolution recommending approval of the application. Of eight lots in this area which were in existence prior to conditional use review, Fire Department records indicate that they began operation in 1923, 1924, 1939, 1959, 1960, 1964 and 1968.

It is evident that, even though the applicants for parking lot permits consider the use to be 'interim', as does the Planning Commission, the record shows that parking lots tend to be permanent, rather than temporary uses of land and sources of parking. If parking lots are to be continued as permitted land uses in the downtown commercial area, conditional use approval should be given only for a two to three year period of time, with no provision for renewal.

Recommendation: A non-renewable time limit on the use of land for a surface parking lot should be added to the Planning Code, either in Section 212 if no restriction on provision of new facilities in the downtown area is imposed, or in the special use district section of the Code if this type of restriction is adopted. Parking lots that would be in existence for longer than this period of time should be considered a permanent use of the land and should be governed by the Planning Code provisions

regarding parking structures. Those existing facilities whose authorization is subject to renewal should not be extended beyond the original two to five year period.

E. Proposed Policy (Residential): Encourage low or no-auto ownership in neighborhoods that are well served by transit and are convenient to neighborhood shopping.

Working in conjunction with the residential rezoning staff in the Department of City Planning, reduced off-street parking requirements have been proposed for multi-family buildings in certain areas of the city well served by transit and convenient to shopping districts. These standards were based on surveys done during the summer of 1975 by the Department which indicated lower car ownership patterns in large multi-family buildings.

Recommendation: As the rezoning study progresses, further refinement of these reduced requirements may occur. It is strongly recommended that such reduced requirements be a part of the final rezoning proposal made to the City Planning Commission in order to reinforce the trend to less auto ownership in these densely developed and transit-served areas of San Francisco.

F. Proposed Policy (Residential): In new housing, especially multi-family housing, a portion of the off-street parking spaces should be for compact cars.

The same surveys mentioned above also established the fact that approximately half of the cars owned by San Franciscans living in multi-family buildings are of compact or intermediate size that can be parked in spaces 8 feet wide by 16 feet long. This pattern was also evident in single family homes, although a slightly lower percent of compact cars was owned by occupants of this type of dwelling. Given this pattern in San Francisco, and the probable continuing trend of compact car sales in the United States, the Planning Code should be changed to reflect this fact.

Recommendation: Section 137(b) of the Planning Code should be changed to permit one-half of the spaces to be of compact car size (8 feet by 16 feet, or 128 square feet, which will allow both compact and intermediate size cars to be parked) for buildings containing four or more dwelling units. For non-residential buildings, the Code should allow half of any required spaces above ten to be compact car spaces with these same dimensions.

III. RELATED ACTIONS

There are several other actions which should be mentioned briefly. They do not necessarily fit under the heading of actions to implement adopted policies, but rather they relate to various parking programs that can affect how much parking is needed and how it is used, or to Planning Department work program items that have parking as a component.

Differential Parking Tax Rates

A tax on the use of parking spaces was one of the parking programs analyzed in the joint report. As indicated, there is already a 10 percent tax on the use of "for hire" parking spaces in San Francisco. This tax was imposed by the Board of Supervisors in 1970 as a revenue generating measure, rather than a regulatory measure. The tax did, however, act at least in part as a regulatory measure, as records indicate that both parkers and revenues decreased when the tax was imposed. The Board of Supervisors has recently been considering raising the parking tax (it was originally a 25 percent tax), again solely as a revenue generating action.

A study was done by this consultant of alternative tax rates to determine the revenue generating potential and impact on long-term parking. The rates considered were the existing 10 percent rate, the Supervisors' proposed 15 percent across-the-board rate, a 10 percent short-term, 25 percent long-term rate structure, and a zero percent short-term, 25 percent long-term rate structure. The study indicated that a 10 percent rate applied to short-term and a 25 percent rate applied to long-term parkers would generate more tax revenue than a straight 15 percent rate, while freeing some long-term parking spaces for short-term use. Applying a 25 percent tax to long-term parking only would generate approximately the same amount of tax revenues as a straight 15 percent rate.

In the downtown area, the imposition of a 10 percent/25 percent differential tax rate would probably cause long-term parkers to 1) move to areas where daily rates are lower, such as south of Market Street, where considerably lower priced spaces are available, 2) switch to transit or carpool, or 3) absorb costs in some cases, depending upon income and the ability to write off the cost as a business expense. Operator revenue will decrease in the core of the downtown area where parking is most expensive, although it may increase in the cheaper facilities. However, keeping the short-term parking tax at 10 percent (or removing the tax) and having more short-term spaces available in the area experiencing highest demand will probably allow operators to recover much if not all of the revenue lost through the shift in long-term parkers to transit or other facilities.

Recommendation: The Board of Supervisors should consider, rather than a flat five or 10 percent raise in the tax rate, an increased tax rate applied differentially. A differential tax rate would mean different rates for different types and durations of parking, and could be used to encourage one type of parking -- such as carpool parking, and discourage another -- such as single occupant commute autos. A differential rate could act as an implementation tool for parking management policies in that it would tend to discourage at least some long-term (commute) parking and encourage a shift to transit as the work trip mode and could produce a shift in the utilization of spaces so that more of the existing spaces (especially in the downtown area) are available for short-term users.

Application for Carpool Program Funds

As indicated in the study data report, Parking in San Francisco: Conditions and Trends, increasing the number of persons per car during the commute period could have a significant impact on the need to expand transit capacity during the peak commute period and on the need for additional parking spaces, especially in the downtown area. While carpooling cannot remove all of the pressures resulting from increasing employment population, it is an alternative to increasing levels of automobiles that should be explored.

The California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) has been operating a carpooling program for the past 18 months in various areas, including San Francisco and the Bay Area. CalTrans' carpooling program has been funded in the past from monies originally authorized by the Federal Energy Conservation Act of 1973, which allowed Highway Trust Fund dollars to be used on a matching basis with local funds to sponsor carpooling programs. Under this provision, 90 percent of the cost is paid by the Highway Trust Fund dollars (known more commonly as F.A.U. funds) and 10 percent is paid by the local agency or government sponsoring the program. In Sacramento, for instance, the local 10 percent was paid jointly by the city, the county and CalTrans. Although

the Energy Conservation Act expires at the end of this year, the program will probably be continued by Congress in the extension of the Act. CalTrans expects to continue its carpooling program and hopes to supplement the F.A.U. funds by using what is known as SB 325 monies (from the Transportation Development Act of 1971, California).

Recommendation: The City of San Francisco should investigate using a portion of its F.A.U. funds for an expanded carpooling program serving San Francisco, working through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the local district office of CalTrans to secure SB 325 monies as the local matching funds (the local matching funds cannot be Federal monies). Care should be taken, however, that any local transit projects that might be funded by F.A.U. monies are not jeopardized by allocating funds to an expanded carpooling program. The City should also aggressively pursue any other funding sources for expanding the carpooling program in San Francisco.

Licensing of Commercial Parking Facilities

A problem encountered during the data gathering phase of the parking management study was the lack of readily available data on the numbers of off-street parking spaces in facilities throughout the City. This lack of data necessitated considerable staff time to do a facility-by-facility field check, which was only accomplished for the downtown area of the city. Although there are some records that can be checked for information, such as the Tax Collector's records and the Fire Department's records (any parking facility must have a Fire Department permit in order to operate), they often do not have the type of information necessary to enable a complete and accurate record of off-street spaces to be kept, and are in such a variety of locations that data gathering is difficult.

Management of the city's parking supply entails keeping an inventory of that supply -- at the very least, a recording of the numbers and locations of parking lots and garages, the number of spaces in each, the general use of the facility (for business fleet parking, medical office parking, and the like), the rate structures and whether a facility is still in existence. Preferably, this information should be available in one place.

Recommendation: The City should consider the institution of a licensing requirement for all off-street parking facilities where a fee is charged for parking. Such a license would be renewed annually, and the application for the license would include a request for the information indicated above. The purpose of the license would be for inventory only, rather than for regulation or revenue generation, and the fee for the license would be to cover administrative costs. The licensing responsibility could rest with the Parking Authority. An alternative to this approach could be to place this responsibility with a city Department of Transportation should the City decide to consolidate all transportation functions in one agency.

Fisherman's Wharf

This area was not specifically treated in the parking management study, even though it can be considered as "satellite" to the downtown core in terms of tourist attraction, hotel and motel use, shopping and entertainment facilities and an increasing amount of office uses. The City Planning Commission, recognizing the importance of this area, adopted a Northern Waterfront Plan as an element of the City's Master Plan in 1969. The possibility of considerable additional development on piers and at other locations in the Northern Waterfront has led the City Planning Department and the Port of San Francisco to embark on a comprehensive study of this area to determine how this growth should be designed and directed.

It is recommended that the issue of the growth of the parking supply, especially in the Fisherman's Wharf area (bounded by Van Ness, Bay Street and the Bay) be carefully considered. As indicated in the parking conditions and trends report, there are 4,874 off-street, non-residential parking spaces available in this 27 block area. Of this number, 3,387 or 69 percent, are available to the public; 67 percent of these spaces -- 2,279 -- have been built since 1969. Given this significant growth, in addition to the traffic congestion and the impacts of new development, consideration should be given to the possibility of establishing a parking special use district, similar to the district proposed for downtown with conditions specific to the Northern Waterfront area, or to incorporating such conditions within the Northern Waterfront Special Use Districts which are now in the Planning Code.

Yerba Buena Center and the Temporary Parking Control Area

The Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance in April, 1975 establishing a temporary parking control area for that portion of the downtown area within commuter walking distance of the Yerba Buena Center (YBC) Redevelopment Project Area, prohibiting installation of new parking facilities in this area until January 1, 1976. This ordinance was passed in order to 1) implement a Board policy to limit strictly the development of parking facilities in the area; 2) to avoid the threatened displacement of residences and businesses by demolition of buildings for parking to replace parking lots eliminated by development of YBC; and 3) to stabilize the area pending completion of the parking management study.

In the course of the study, the parking control area was not considered for specific treatment. Rather, this area was considered as a part of the downtown, where policies were recommended which would limit the provision of new parking facilities within an automobile control area, locate new short-term parking facilities peripheral to this control area and locate new long-term (commute) parking facilities outside of the downtown commercial district (the southern boundary of which is Folsom Street). Criteria for review of new short-term facilities were established. Another policy recommends that all new parking facilities in San Francisco should be reviewed according to specific criteria accompanying that policy, and that proposed facilities in conflict with the criteria should not be built. It is

anticipated that this policy will be implemented by establishing conditional use review by the City Planning Commission of all new parking lots and garages. These policies, if implemented, would provide a parking management treatment for the entire downtown area, including the Yerba Buena Center area.

Recommendation: The City should act to implement the proposed policies in the parking management study which would control the growth of the parking inventory around the Yerba Buena Center project area.

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